

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 1, 2010

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 27, 2010

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 19, 2010

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 6, 2010

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009–10 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2143

Introduced by Assembly Member Gilmore
(Principal coauthors: Assembly Members Arambula and Cook)

February 18, 2010

~~An act to add Section 64.5 to the Military and Veterans Code, relating to military and veterans. An act relating to workforce development.~~

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2143, as amended, Gilmore. ~~Department of Veterans Affairs: consolidation of services to veterans. Workforce development: Employment Development Department: veterans: report.~~

Existing law contains various programs for job training and employment investment, including work incentive and employment training outreach programs.

This bill would require the Employment Development Department to submit a report, on or before March 1, 2011, to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee and to the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature, regarding the department's veteran employment and job training programs and suggested options for a governance and management model to increase program integration and coordination, improve service delivery efficiency, and enhance program performance.

~~Existing law establishes the Department of Veterans Affairs within state government and sets forth its powers and duties, including, but not limited to, administration of veterans benefits programs. Existing law establishes the California Veterans Board within the department and sets forth its powers and duties, including, but not limited to, its power to determine operational policy for the department.~~

~~This bill would establish the California Veterans Services and Workforce Development Division within the Department of Veterans Affairs for the purpose of coordinating and administering veterans assistance programs in the state, and would require the division to perform various functions and duties relating to the coordination and administration of veterans assistance programs, as specified. The bill would require the administrative and support staff responsible for the administration of the specified programs to be transferred from the Employment Development Department to the division, and would require the costs of the transfer to utilize existing resources of the Department of Veterans Affairs.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. (a) On or before March 1, 2011, the Employment
- 2 Development Department, in coordination with the Department
- 3 of Veterans Affairs, shall report to the Joint Legislative Budget
- 4 Committee and to the appropriate policy committees of the
- 5 Legislature regarding both of the following:
- 6 (1) How the Employment Development Department's veteran
- 7 employment and job training programs are currently structured.
- 8 (2) Suggested options for a governance and management model
- 9 to increase program integration and coordination, improve service
- 10 delivery efficiency, and enhance program performance.
- 11 (b) The report required by subdivision (a) shall include, but not
- 12 be limited to, all of the following:
- 13 (1) A recommended set of goals and objectives, in relation to
- 14 increasing employment and training opportunities for veterans,
- 15 and appropriate performance standards that may be established
- 16 to evaluate the effectiveness and accountability of veteran
- 17 employment and job training programs administered by, or funded
- 18 through, state agencies and departments.

1 (2) *A description of the extent to which veterans are integrated*
2 *in California's Strategic Plan under the federal Workforce*
3 *Investment Act of 1998 and the Wagner-Peyser Act.*

4 (3) *Information regarding how federal Veteran Employment*
5 *and Assistance Program and Workforce Investment Act grants are*
6 *integrated and coordinated to support veteran employment and*
7 *job training programs and how these grants could more*
8 *significantly contribute to the effectiveness of the state's veteran*
9 *employment and job training programs.*

10 (4) *Identification of federal and state funding for veteran*
11 *employment and job training programs, including, but not limited*
12 *to, funding from the federal Jobs for Veterans Act, the*
13 *Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Workforce Investment Act of 1998;*
14 *statutory or regulatory restrictions, if any, which prevent the*
15 *integration and coordination of the programs; and*
16 *recommendations regarding securing or leveraging additional*
17 *government and nongovernmental funding sources.*

18 (5) *The status of any federal waivers necessary to increase the*
19 *integration and coordination of veteran employment and job*
20 *training programs.*

21 (6) *A description of other integrated and coordinated state*
22 *veteran employment and job training program delivery models*
23 *that represent best practices, and whether those models could be*
24 *employed in this state to improve the delivery of veteran*
25 *employment and job training services.*

26 (7) *Recommendations on how a state integrated and coordinated*
27 *veteran employment and job training program could improve the*
28 *percentage of California veterans qualifying for unemployment*
29 *insurance and federal veteran compensation and pension benefits*
30 *to which veterans are entitled.*

31 (8) *The type of training necessary for state and local personnel*
32 *to better support the operation of veteran employment and job*
33 *training programs and the delivery of these services.*

34 (c) *The Employment Development Department shall consult*
35 *with the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, the California*
36 *Research Bureau, and other state and local agencies and*
37 *departments that administer or offer veteran employment and job*
38 *training programs, or have related programs and services that*
39 *serve veterans, in order to ascertain the information required to*
40 *be submitted in the report as specified in subdivision (b).*

1 (d) (1) *The requirement for submitting a report imposed under*
2 *subdivision (a) is inoperative on March 1, 2015, pursuant to*
3 *Section 10231.5 of the Government Code.*

4 (2) *A report to be submitted pursuant to subdivision (a) shall*
5 *be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government*
6 *Code.*

7 ~~SECTION 1. The Legislature hereby finds and declares the~~
8 ~~following:~~

9 ~~(a) California has the largest veteran population in the nation,~~
10 ~~comprised of an estimated 2 million veterans. Each month,~~
11 ~~thousands of military personnel are released from active service,~~
12 ~~and face tremendous challenges transitioning back into civilian~~
13 ~~life.~~

14 ~~(b) The challenges military veterans face are compounded by~~
15 ~~a complex system of veteran assistance programs that is difficult~~
16 ~~to navigate.~~

17 ~~(c) The United States Department of Veterans Affairs expended~~
18 ~~approximately \$6 billion in California in the 2005 federal fiscal~~
19 ~~year. Of that amount, \$2.66 billion was in disability payments~~
20 ~~(compensation and benefits) to veterans. The states that have the~~
21 ~~largest veteran populations in the nation are California, Florida,~~
22 ~~and Texas. Texas veterans have collected 44 percent more disability~~
23 ~~benefits than the amount collected by California veterans.~~

24 ~~(d) Increasing disability benefit participation in California in~~
25 ~~an amount that would approach the national average could generate~~
26 ~~an additional \$330 million in annual payments to California~~
27 ~~veterans.~~

28 ~~(e) It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this act to~~
29 ~~consolidate the veterans assistance programs and their dedicated~~
30 ~~staff as identified in Section 64.5 of the Military and Veterans~~
31 ~~Code, as added by this act, within the California Veterans Services~~
32 ~~and Workforce Development Division of the Department of~~
33 ~~Veterans Affairs.~~

34 ~~SEC. 2. Section 64.5 is added to the Military and Veterans~~
35 ~~Code, to read:~~

36 ~~64.5. (a) The California Veterans Services and Workforce~~
37 ~~Development Division is hereby established within the department~~
38 ~~for the purpose of coordinating and administering veterans~~
39 ~~assistance programs in the state. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs~~
40 ~~shall have authority over the division.~~

~~(b) The division shall do all of the following:~~

~~(1) Coordinate with other state agencies that provide benefits and assistance to veterans to ensure that information about veterans assistance programs and benefits is made available to all state agencies that serve veterans in the state.~~

~~(2) Administer the Transitional Assistance Program (TAP) and the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP), and oversee the duties of Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVER) as prescribed under the Jobs for Veterans State Grants program, in cooperation with the Employment Development Department. The division shall work with staff from the Employment Development Department to develop a plan whereby responsibility for the administration of TAP and DVOP shall be transferred from the Employment Development Department to the division.~~

~~(3) Ensure that other state agencies and officials that are involved in the implementation and administration of veterans services programs are informed when any changes in existing programs are required, or new programs are established that provide assistance and benefits to veterans, and require that those agencies and officials report to the division when those changes occur or new programs are established.~~

~~(4) Collaborate with staff from other state agencies, including, but not limited to, the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, the Employment Training Panel, the California Workforce Investment Board, the State Department of Mental Health, the Department of General Services, the State Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, and representatives of the University of California, the California State University, and the California Community Colleges with regard to the provision of veterans services and benefits.~~

~~(c) 1. In complying with this section, all administrative and support staff responsible for the administration of the DVOP, the TAP, and Local Veteran Employment Representatives shall be transferred from the Employment Development Department to the division.~~

~~(2) Any costs associated with the implementation of these transfers shall utilize existing resources of the Department of Veterans Affairs.~~